

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6, 8-38, and 70-75 are presently active; Claims 39-64 have been previously withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 8, 9, 17, 23, 24, 25, and 36 have been presently amended. Claims 7 and 65-69 have been canceled without prejudice. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 4, 17, 20, 21, 25 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Deschuytere et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,515,768). Claims 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Deschuytere et al. Claims 2, 3, 18, 26, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Deschuytere et al and further in view of Li et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5,822,502). Claims 5-16, 19, 27-35 and 38 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Firstly, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 5-16, 19, 27-35 and 38.

Secondly, in an effort to expedite prosecution, the allowable subject matter of Claim 7 has been included in all the independent claims.

Thus, independent Claims 1, 17, 23-25, and 36 (and the claims dependent therefrom) patentably define over the art of record.

This amendment is submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.116 which after final rejection permits entering of amendments canceling claims, complying with any requirement of form expressly set forth in a previous Office Action, presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal, or presenting amendments touching on the merits upon a

showing of good and sufficient reasons why the amendment is necessary and was not presented earlier. The present amendment adds the identified allowable subject matter in Claim 7 to the independent claims, thereby placing these claims in a condition for allowance. No new matter has been added, and this amendment does not raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search. It is therefore respectfully requested that the present amendment be entered under 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

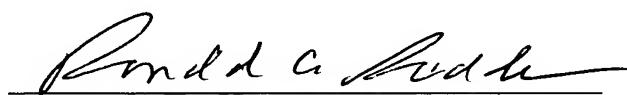
Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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